

Marion County ATC students connect with elementary students to create excitement and improve image through hands-on demonstrations



Students who participated in senior project demonstrations.

Front row (l to r): Jonathon Bradshaw, automotive technology; Courtney Cissell, health sciences; Nick Lamkin, welding; Josh Mills, IT; and Laura Higdon, IT.

Second row (l to r): Damon Milby, machine tool technology; Paul Brohm, automotive technology, Jake Thompson, construction technology, Jacob Huff, engineering and Marion Co. ATC principal Laura Arnold.

Over the past year and a half, a strategic plan to positively transform the image of career and technical education has evolved in the Marion County school district. It was created to include virtually every level of the community resulting in optimistic changes taking place.

The hard work of many individuals to elevate the importance of career and technical education also includes concentrated efforts by area technology center faculty, staff and students. One of latest activities has been connecting with elementary students to generate interest in the programs offered at the school.

At the request of West Marion Elementary School principal Benji Mattingly, Marion County ATC students met with 4th and 5th grade students to share their respective senior project. The seniors represented different seven programs offered at the ATC.

Photo at right: Welding student Nicholas Lamkin conducts a hands-on activity by demonstrating appropriate welding attire.

Each student rose to the challenge by engaging their younger counterparts in hands-on activities and meaningful discussion in their respective program area. It was a real life experience for the seniors to keep the interest of approximately 180 students – and they did.



The seniors also discussed courses they had taken at the area technology center, their post-secondary goals in the technical field, and how this tied into their future career goals.

“The younger students were very interested with the presentations and it is our hope that many of them will be future students at our area technology center,” said Marion County ATC principal Laura Arnold. “Our students were knowledgeable, poised and confident about their subject matter. I was proud of their level of professionalism.”

According to Arnold, business and industry employers have relayed to her the importance of students learning a skill and being able to effectively communicate with others. The elementary school visit allowed students to do both.

“I will be able to say to our Marion County and Washington County employers that this group of students will have no problem meeting their expectations,” said Arnold.

Photo: Information Technology student Laura Higdon conducts a lively discussion using a PowerPoint she created.

“It was a lot of fun,” said Laura. “I really enjoyed talking to the students. It made me feel good when the students were interested in the subject area and participated in the discussion regarding my topic.”



According to Kentucky Tech area supervisor Mary Stratton, the presentation activity was part of a larger plan for student recruitment.

Stratton:

“Our students took a leadership role by developing positive relationships with elementary students and helping them learn about careers while having fun.

“When students are introduced to career and technical education in a fun manner, its easy for them to become excited and want to learn more. I’m proud of our students and their efforts to lay the groundwork for future student recruitment.

“The partnership and cooperative efforts among the Marion County school district, area technology center and the local community have allowed students more of an advantage to pursue a career path that will impact their quality of life for years to come.”

Marion County Schools Superintendent Roger Marcum has been actively involved in all aspects of creating and developing the marketing plan to bring about the desired change in perception in the district and community. He has been supportive of the Marion County ATC faculty and staff for their beefed up efforts to become part of the whole community.

Marcum:

“I want to personally thank the leadership and staff of Marion County Area Technology Center, Marion County High School and West Marion Elementary School for providing this engaging, relevant and interactive learning opportunity for both the WMES 4th & 5th grade students and the MCHS seniors.

“This makes the value of technical education real for our students and will promote interest and enthusiasm for pursuing technical education and a career in a technical field.

“We are doing something very special with our efforts to improve technical education in Marion County. I appreciate your Lagniappe...Going Beyond Full Measure effort!”

Good News Flash #234

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February 26, 2008

Office of Career and Technical Education

